

Amendments to the Drawings:

A sheet of drawings containing the original Figure 2 labeled "Replacement Sheet" and marked "2/3" is submitted.

Another sheet of drawings containing an amended Figure 3 labeled "Replacement Sheet" and marked "3/3" is submitted.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-4 and 6-9 are pending. Claims 1-4 and 6-9 have been rejected. Claims 6 and 9 have been cancelled without prejudice or devotion of the subject matter to the public. New claim 10 has been added. The original Figure 2 erroneously replaced by Applicants' response dated March 3, 2006 has been added by amendment. The newly added Figure 2 introduced in Applicants' response dated March 3, 2006 has been amended to now read Figure 3. The specification has been amended to insert a brief description and detailed description of Figure 3. Support for the amendments to claim 1, Figures 2 and 3, and the specification may at least be found in the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed. No new matter has been entered as a result of the amendments made herein.

The Examiner objected to the drawings due to the elimination of the original Figure 2.

The Examiner objects to the specification because a brief description and detailed description of FIG. 2 does not currently exist.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-4 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-3 and 5-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of U.S.P.N. 3,570,343 to Wolnosky in view of U.S.P.N. 4,905,556 to Haack et al.

The Examiner rejects claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of U.S.P.N. 3,570,343 to Wolnosky in view of U.S.P.N. 4,905,556 to Haack et al. as applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of U.S.P.N. 6,240,818 to Baltschun.

Objection to the Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings due to the elimination of the original Figure 2.

In Applicants' response dated March 3, 2006, Applicants erroneously replaced the original Figure 2 with a new drawing. To correct this mistake Applicants submit a replacement sheet containing the original Figure 2 amended to include "2/3" as in page 2 of 3. Applicants also submit a replacement sheet containing the new drawing submitted in Applicants' response dated March 3, 2006. The replacement sheet contains the new drawing now amended to read "Figure 3" and "3/3" as in page 3 of 3.

Applicants believe the corrected drawings sheets comply with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. 1.121(d).

For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the objection to the drawings and find the drawings meet the statutory requirements.

Objection to the Specification

The Examiner objected to the specification because a brief description and detailed description of FIG. 2 does not currently exist.

As explained in the section entitled "Objection to the Drawings", the FIG. 2 submitted in Applicants' response dated March 3, 2006 has been amended to become Figure 3. Applicants

have amended the Brief Description of the Drawings in the specification to insert a brief description of Figure 3. Applicants have also amended page 6, lines 13-16 of the specification to make specific reference to Figure 3.

In light of these amendments, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the objection to the specification and find the specification meets the statutory requirements.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph.

Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to remove amendments entered through Applicants' response dated March 3, 2006. The subject matter the Examiner asserted as being new has been removed from independent claim 1. Applicants have also cancelled claim 9.

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph and find claims 1-4 and 6-9 allowable.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 5-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of U.S.P.N. 3,570,343 to Wolnosky in view of U.S.P.N. 4,905,556 to Haack et al.

Applicants' amended independent claim 1 now recites the following:

"1. An apparatus for fine blanking of workpieces from a material (1), comprising:

a press plate (10) having a V-ring (11), which is under pressure from a V-ring cylinder (13) comprising a V-ring piston rod (15) connected to a V-ring piston (12) disposed opposite to and in support of the V-ring (11) of the press plate (10), and

a blanking punch (9) which is guided in the press plate (10) and to which a die plate (17) with counterholder (16) is assigned at a ram (7), wherein the ram (7) is supported against at least one compensation cylinder (22) and against at least one main cylinder (19.1, 19.2), and wherein the at least one compensation cylinder (22) is hydraulically connected to the V-ring cylinder (13), and is in hydraulic equilibrium with the V-ring cylinder (13)." (emphasis added)

The Examiner concedes that Wolnosky fails to disclose that the compensation cylinders are hydraulically connected to the V-ring cylinder (Final Office action mailed on May 24, 2006, page 4, second paragraph). The Examiner relies upon Haack et al. to teach an apparatus for blanking wherein cylinders from the upper and lower die shoes are connected hydraulically (Id.). However, neither Wolnosky nor Haack teach the combination of a V-ring cylinder, at least one compensation cylinder and at least one main cylinder as recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

In the apparatus recited in Applicants' amended claim 1, the "at least one compensation cylinder" compensates for the "V-ring cylinder" and achieves hydraulic equilibrium, while the "at least one main cylinder" is utilized in the clamping and punching of the workpiece. The references in the asserted combination do not teach this combination of claim elements recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1. Even if Wolnosky and Haack et al. could be read together to teach an apparatus having compensation cylinders hydraulically connected to a V-ring cylinder, Wolnosky and Haack et al. would still fail to teach, suggest or provide the requisite motivation to adapt their disclosures and teach the additional third cylinder or third type of cylinders, that is, the "at least one main cylinder", in combination with the V-ring cylinder and at least

one compensation cylinder as recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

For at least these reasons, Applicants contend amended independent claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Wolnosky in view of Haack et al.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and find claims 1-3 and 5-9 allowable.

The Examiner also rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of U.S.P.N. 3,570,343 to Wolnosky in view of U.S.P.N. 4,905,556 to Haack et al. as applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of U.S.P.N. 6,240,818 to Baltschun.

Applicants' dependent claim 4 depends from amended independent claim 1.

Applicants reiterate their contention that neither Wolnosky nor Haack teach or suggest all of the elements of Applicants' independent claim 1 for the reasons stated above.

Applicants contend Baltschun does not cure the deficiencies present in either Wolnosky or Haack. The Examiner relies upon Baltschun to teach the importance of equal piston areas of opposed cylinders in a blanking device in order to achieve an equilibrium state (Final Office action mailed on May 24, 2006, page 4, last paragraph). However, Baltschun does not teach, suggest or provide the requisite motivation to adapt its disclosure and teach the additional third cylinder or third type of cylinders, that is, the "at least one main cylinder", in combination with the V-ring cylinder and at least one compensation cylinder as recited in Applicants' amended

independent claim 1. Baltschun cannot be relied upon to cure deficiencies present in the combination of Wolnosky in view of Haack. Furthermore, the combination of Wolnosky in view of Haack and further in view of Baltschun fails to teach, suggest or provide the requisite motivation to adapt their combined teachings to achieve all of the claim elements recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

CONCLUSION

An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

It is submitted that the claims herein patentably define over the art relied on by the Examiner and early allowance of same is courteously solicited.

If any additional fees are required in connection with this case, it is respectfully requested that they be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-0184.

Respectfully submitted,

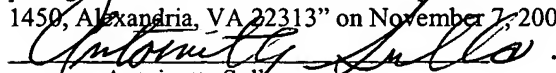
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: "Mailstop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313" on November 7, 2006.


Antoinette Sullo